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BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

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# Annual Report

ON THE

# HEALTH OF BEDFORD

FOR THE YEAR

1955

BY

C. L. SHARP, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

*together with the Report of*

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR





BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

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REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

**For the Year 1955**



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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,  
TOWN HALL,  
BEDFORD.

*November, 1956.*

TO HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR,  
ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS OF THE  
BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report for 1955. I took up my appointment on 25th June, 1956, so that this report is based on the work of my predecessor, Dr. Bowes, who died in October. The work of the department was maintained in the interregnum by Dr. F. A. Williams, Deputy Medical Officer of Health.

The health of the Borough shows no substantial change compared with the previous year, and I will make no detailed comment.

In presenting my first Annual Report I should like to express my appreciation of the kindness with which I have been received by the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee, Members of the Council, and also of the help and co-operation of Chief Officers of other Departments.

I have been fortunate in having arrived in time to benefit from the considerable experience of Mr. F. C. Haynes, Chief Sanitary Inspector, from whom I have had good advice.

I am indebted to Mr. F. J. Dix, Chief Clerk, for his labours in compiling the statistical data for this report, and my thanks also to the staff of the Public Health Department.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

CLIVE L. SHARP,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

# PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

(31st December, 1955)

ALDERMAN L. H. NICHOLSON, M.B.E., *Chairman*  
COUNCILLOR A. R. SHARP, *Vice-Chairman*  
COUNCILLOR R. G. GALE, J.P. (*The Mayor*)  
COUNCILLOR COL. G. A. ANSTEE, O.B.E., M.C., D.L., J.P.  
COUNCILLOR G. R. BAILEY  
COUNCILLOR W. C. FULLER  
COUNCILLOR G. O. JONES  
COUNCILLOR MRS. C. M. METZ  
COUNCILLOR A. H. RANDALL  
COUNCILLOR MRS. M. ROGERS

## PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

*Medical Officer of Health*

C. L. SHARP, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.  
(Commenced 25th June, 1956)

G. K. BOWES, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H.  
(Died 20th October, 1955)

*Deputy and Acting Medical Officer of Health*

F. A. WILLIAMS, M.B., B.S.(Lond.), M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.(Vict.)

*Chief Sanitary Inspector*

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

*Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector and Chief Inspector, Meat and Other Foods*

J. F. WILKINSON, M.R.San.I., Cert. Meat Inspection R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

*Sanitary Inspectors*

E. J. CONSTABLE, A.R.San.I., Cert. Meat Inspection R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

D. P. J. BYRNE, S.I.B., Cert. Meat Inspection R.San.I.

(Resigned 4th September, 1955)

One vacancy

*Chief Clerk*

F. J. DIX

*Clerks*

P. G. ALLSTON

MISS R. E. HOWE

F. V. BATSON

MISS A. W. CHAPMAN

*Disinfectors, Drain Testers, Rodent Destruction Operators,  
and Mortuary Attendants*

F. WOOTTON

H. W. COMMINS

J. E. MUNDAY



# BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

## Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health

### 1. VITAL STATISTICS

#### 1. Summary of Statistics

Area of Borough (in acres)	...	...	...	...	...	4,972
Population—						
Census 1951	...	...	...	...	...	53,075
Registrar-General's Estimated Home Population for 1955						56,030
Number of Inhabited Houses—						
According to rate books (31st December, 1955)	...					16,947
Number of Separate Households—						
Census 1951	...	...	...	...	...	16,301
Rateable Value (31st December, 1955)			...	...	...	£444,248
Yield of One Penny Rate (1955–1956)	...		...	...	...	£1,795

#### EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1955.

				Total	Male	Female	Rate per 1,000 population
Live Births—							
Legitimate	...	...		907	448	459	
Illegitimate	...	...		51	26	25	
Total	...	...	...	<u>958</u>	<u>474</u>	<u>484</u>	Birth Rate—
							Crude 17·1
							Corrected 16·6
Stillbirths—							
Legitimate	...	...		22	12	10	
Illegitimate	...	...		—	—	—	
Total	...	...	...	<u>22</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>10</u>	Rate 0·4
Deaths	...	...	...	586	293	293	Death Rate—
							Uncorrected 10·5
							Corrected 9·5

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age—						Rate per 1,000
			Total	Male	Female	live births
Legitimate	...	...	15	9	6	
Illegitimate	...	...	3	1	2	
			<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	
Total	...	...	18	10	8	Rate 18·8
			<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age—						Rate per 1,000
			Total	Male	Female	live births
Legitimate	...	...	11	5	6	
Illegitimate	...	...	3	1	2	
			<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	
Total	...	...	14	6	8	Rate 14·6
			<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth—

From sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Other causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	—

## 2. Vital Statistics, Bedford, England and Wales and Great Towns compared

	Bedford	England and Wales*	Great Towns
BIRTHS—			
Live Births ... ..	16.6	15.0	17.0
Still Births ... ..	0.39	0.33	0.35
	22.4(a)	23.2 (a)	23.71(a)
DEATHS—			
All causes ... ..	9.5	11.7	12.0
Typhoid and Paratyphoid ... ..	—	0.00	0.00
Whooping Cough ... ..	—	0.00	0.00
Diphtheria ... ..	—	0.00	0.00
Tuberculosis ... ..	0.07	0.15	0.17
Influenza ... ..	0.04	0.07	0.06
Smallpox ... ..	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis (including polio-encephalitis) ... ..	0.02	0.01	0.01
Pneumonia ... ..	0.36	0.49	0.53
NOTIFICATIONS (corrected)—			
Typhoid Fever ... ..	—	0.00	Not available
Paratyphoid Fever ... ..	—	0.02	
Meningococcal Infections ... ..	0.05	Not available	
Scarlet Fever ... ..	0.32	0.75	
Whooping Cough ... ..	0.86	Not available	
Diphtheria ... ..	—	0.01	
Erysipelas ... ..	0.09	Not available	
Smallpox ... ..	—	—	
Measles ... ..	20.13	Not available	
Pneumonia ... ..	1.57	0.64	
Acute Poliomyelitis (including polio-encephalitis)—			
Paralytic ... ..	0.04	0.09	
Non-paralytic ... ..	—	0.07	
Food Poisoning ... ..	0.66	0.33	
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..	0.23	Not available	
Dysentery ... ..	0.14	0.94	
	Rates	per 1,000 live	births
DEATHS—			
All causes under 1 year of age ... ..	18.8	25.1(b)	25.1(b)
Enteritis and diarrhoea under 2 years of age ... ..	2.09	0.1	Not available

(a) Per 1,000 Total (live and still) births.  
(b) Per 1,000 *related* live births.

★ Provisional

### 3. Population

The normally resident population as given by the Registrar General was 56,030, an increase of 860 over the previous year. The natural increase, or excess of births over deaths, was 372. Thus it will be seen that there was a gain of 488 persons on account of the excess of immigration over emigration.

The following table shows the population changes since 1950. In 1950 the Registrar General began to replace estimates for "civilian population" by estimates for "home population", the latter figure including the armed forces stationed in the area. This change in method has made no difference to the Borough of Bedford.

POPULATION 1950-1955

Year	Population	Increase over previous year	Natural Increase	Difference due to excess of immigration over emigration
1950	53,770			
1951	54,120	350	218	132
1952	54,400	280	207	73
1953	54,770	370	368	2
1954	55,170	400	463	— 63
1955	56,030	860	372	488
Total increase 1949-1954		2,260	1,628	632
Average yearly increase in 5 years ... ..		452	326	126

It will be seen that in the past five years there has been an increase of 2,260 in the population. A good deal more than half this increase, 1,628, is due to natural increase, while the remainder is due to the excess of immigration over emigration. Reference has already been made in previous reports as well as in other parts of this report to the immigration of foreign nationals which has played a great part in the increase of population over the past five years.

### 4. Birth Rate

The birth rate during the year was 17·1. The Registrar General has supplied a figure to correct the birth rate in order to make allowance for age and sex constitution of the population. On multiplying by this figure of 0·97 the corrected birth rate becomes 16·6. The corresponding figure for England and Wales is 15·0 and for Great Towns 17·0. The birth rate shows a reduction under that for 1954, namely 16·6, and the total number of births was 12 less.



## 5. Still Births

The still birth rate for Bedford was 0·39 per 1,000 population which may be compared with 0·33 for England and Wales. The corresponding rates for 1,000 total live and still births were 22·4 and 23·2 respectively. In order to eliminate chance fluctuations the figures over a period of five years are given in the following table, from which it appears, that the average figures vary little from those for the country as a whole.

### STILL BIRTH RATES

Bedford and England and Wales, 1951–1955

Year	Per 1,000 population		Per 1,000 total births (live and still)	
	Bedford	England and Wales	Bedford	England and Wales
1951	0·22	0·36	14·1	23·0
1952	0·39	0·33	25·0	22·6
1953	0·31	0·35	19·7	22·5
1954	0·51	0·36	28·1	24·0
1955	0·39	0·33	22·4	23·2
Average 1951 to 1955	0·36	0·35	21·9	22·9

## 6. Death Rate

The uncorrected death rate was 10·5 compared with 9·2 for the previous year. After correction by multiplying by the Registrar-General's comparability figure of 0·91 to make allowances for age and sex constitution, a figure of 9·5 is obtained, which may be compared with 11·7, the figure for England and Wales, and 12·0 for Great Towns. It can hardly be expected that these surprisingly low figures will be maintained.



## 7. Causes of Death

Cause of Death							Males	Females
ALL CAUSES	...	...	...	...	...	...	293	293
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
2.	Tuberculosis, other	...	...	...	...	...	2	—
3.	Syphilitic diseases	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
4.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
5.	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
6.	Meningococcal infections	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
8.	Measles	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...	...	...	...	...	13	7
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	...	...	...	...	...	15	3
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast	...	...	...	...	...	—	13
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...	...	...	...	...	—	2
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	...	...	...	...	...	31	24
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
16.	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	—	3
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous systems	...	...	...	...	...	26	51
18.	Coronary diseases, angina	...	...	...	...	...	47	34
19.	Hypertension, with heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	12	11
20.	Other heart diseases	...	...	...	...	...	30	52
21.	Other circulatory disease	...	...	...	...	...	9	9
22.	Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	2	—
23.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	13	7
24.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	23	10
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	...	1	4
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	5	5
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	...	3	—
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	...	...	...	10	—
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
31.	Congenital malformations	...	...	...	...	...	4	3
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	...	...	26	32
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	...	...	...	7	2
34.	All other accidents	...	...	...	...	...	7	8
35.	Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	2	5
36.	Homicide and operations of war	...	...	...	...	...	—	—

A few comments may be made on individual causes of deaths. Tuberculosis (numbered 1 and 2 in the list) caused only 4 deaths in comparison with 6 in the previous year. Tuberculosis now is becoming a relatively unimportant cause of mortality. No deaths were caused by diphtheria (4), meningococcal infections (6), measles (8), or whooping cough (5). One death occurred from acute poliomyelitis (7). Cancer and allied conditions caused 108 deaths in comparison with 94 in 1954. Of the deaths from cancer 18 were due to cancer of the lung, a cause of death that has become more important than tuberculosis. Influenza (22) caused 2 deaths as compared with none in 1954.

Almost half the total number of deaths occurred from those causes which in a general way may be said to represent the degenerative changes of

old age; 77 deaths compared with 76 in 1954 were caused by cerebral haemorrhage and similar causes (17); 204 deaths from diseases of the heart and arteries apart from cerebral haemorrhage occurred, compared with 173 in 1954.

The following table shows the number of deaths from motor vehicle and other accidents over the past five years.

	Motor Vehicle Accidents		Total	All Other Accidents		Total
	M	F		M	F	
1950	6	1	7	5	5	10
1951	2	3	5	7	11	18
1952	5	1	6	6	3	9
1953	4	—	4	1	6	7
1954	7	2	9	7	8	15

8. Maternal Mortality

No deaths occurred in connection with pregnancy and childbirth.

9. Infant Mortality

The total number of infant deaths was 18, of which 10 were male and 8 female, giving an infant mortality rate of 18·8 per 1,000 live births over the year, which may be compared with 24·9 per 1,000 related births, the figure for England and Wales, and to 25·1, the figure for the Great Towns.

The table for the past five years given below shows that the figures for Bedford compare well with those for the country as a whole and for the Great Towns.

DEATH RATE PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS

Year			<i>Bedford</i>	<i>England and Wales</i>	<i>Great Towns</i>
1951	...	...	25·0	29·6	30·8
1952	...	...	19·5	27·6	27·6
1953	...	...	23·6	26·8	27·4
1954	...	...	20·6	25·5	25·2
1955	...	...	18·8	24·9	25·1
Average 1951–1955			21·5	26·9	27·2

Immaturity or premature birth is an important cause of infantile mortality. The following list shows the ages at death of the 11 infants who died from this cause.

10 minutes	...	1	} 0-24 hours ...	...	7	} Under 1 year ...	11
1 hour	...	2					
2 hours	...	2					
4 hours	...	1					
15 hours	...	1					
1 day ...	...	1	} Under 7 days	...	4		
2 days	...	2					
5 days	...	1					

The number of neo-natal deaths, or those occurring under one month was 14, corresponding to a rate of 14.6 per 1,000 live births, which may be compared with 16.5, the figure for the previous year.

INFANT MORTALITY BY AGE, SEX AND CAUSE

Cause	Sex	Weeks				Total under one month	Months				Total under one year
		0-	1-	2-	3-		1-	3-	6-	9-	
Bronchitis and Pneumonia	M	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gastro-Enteritis ...	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Congenital Malformations	M	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	2
	F	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Immaturity (Associated immaturity) ...	M	4	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	4
	F	7	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	7
Haemolytic Disease ...	M	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
All causes ...	M	5	-	-	1	6	1	-	1	2	10
	F	8	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	8

The following table shows the individual causes of deaths in infants under 4 weeks.

NEONATAL MORTALITY ACCORDING TO CERTIFIED CAUSES

Cause	Weeks				Total under one month
	0-	1-	2-	3-	
Immaturity ...	11	-	-	-	11
Congenital Malformations ...	1	-	-	1	2
Other causes ...	1	-	-	-	1
All causes ...	13	-	-	1	14

## **II. SOCIAL CONDITIONS**

### **Immigration**

The number of foreign nationals has increased from approximately 2,219 at the end of 1954 to 2,962 at the end of 1955. The problems arising from this immigration have already been commented upon. Latterly a small number of coloured British subjects from the West Indies have arrived and the numbers have been increasing. Similar problems over housing and hospital accommodation will no doubt arise if this continues. And the problem as a whole is more complex and difficult for the coloured immigrant.



### III. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

#### 1. General

With few exceptions all houses have an internal water supply and are connected with the sewers.

#### 2. Water Supply

##### (A) QUALITY AND QUANTITY

I am indebted to the Water Engineer, Mr. A. B. Beardmore, for the following information relating to the water supply.

(1) The water supply to the Borough has been satisfactory both in (a) quality and (b) quantity.

(2) A summary of bacteriological analyses of the raw water and water as supplied is given below:—

##### BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS, 1955

Source	No. of samples	Presumptive Coliforms		Faecal Coliforms		Plate Counts		
		Pos.	av. orgs. per 100 ml.	Pos.	av. orgs. per 100 ml.	No. of samples	orgs. per ml.	
							37°C	22°C
<b>Raw Water ...</b>	52	52	1,308	52	663	52	712	3,000+
<b>Treated Water:</b>								
Inside Works ...	352	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	52	21	9
Outlet to town	354	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	55	14	17
Town taps, Meters and Mains not in service ...	511	88	2	3 { 1 2	2 18			



The following table shows the results of chemical analyses of the raw water and fully treated water.

BOROUGH OF BEDFORD—WATER DEPARTMENT  
CHEMICAL ANALYSES 1955

	Raw Water		Water into supply	
	Range	Average	Range	Average
pH ... ..	7.5–8.2	7.75	7.3–7.8	7.4
Turbidity ... ..	7–160	21	Less than 1.0	Less than 1.0
Colour ... ..	10–100	32	1–9	5.0
Carbonate Alkalinity ... ..	180–282	236	191–275	231
Non-carbonate Hardness ... ..	90–182	135	130–185	141
Total Hardness ... ..	292–444	371	327–475	372
Free CO <sub>2</sub> ... ..	4.5–18	8.2	15–22	18.6
Total Solids ... ..	454–584	519	484–572	541
Chlorine in Chlorides ... ..	24–43	32	28–44	35
Conductivity ... ..	530–760	690	600–750	695
Ammonia (f and s) ... ..	0.02–0.49	0.11	trace–0.04	0.02
Albuminoid ... ..	0.16–0.62	0.33	0.1–0.34	0.16
Nitrites ... ..	—	0.05	Nil	Nil
Nitrate ... ..	2.1–5.2	3.6	2.0–4.6	3.5
O <sub>2</sub> absorbed in 3 hours at 37°C	1.6–6.8	3.0	0.76–2.7	0.13
Iron ... ..	0.02–0.26	0.05	Less than 0.05	Less than 0.05
Copper ... ..	Trace	Trace	Trace to 0.12	Less than 0.05
Lead ... ..	—	Nil	Nil	Nil
Zinc ... ..	—	Nil	Nil	Nil
Calcium ... ..	108–160	134	116–160	135
Magnesium ... ..	11–19	12	11–18	14
Fluorine ... ..	—	0.34	—	0.27
Sulphates ... ..	110–141	120	112–138	118
Silica ... ..	5–17	8.5	1–14	5.0
Phosphates ... ..	—	0.3	0.15–0.86	0.2
Aluminium ... ..	—	—	trace to 0.10	Less than 0.1
Anionic Detergent— Manoxol O.T. ... ..	0.12–0.36	0.25	0.07–0.3	0.17

Results in parts per million.

Estimation of Detergents after Longwell and Maniece as recommended by the Synthetic Detergents Committee.

There was no change in the scheme of taking water samples for examination in the Public Health Laboratory.

The following table shows the result of these examinations.

BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS, 1955. FULLY TREATED WATER

No. of samples of water in the course of distribution	Presumptive Coliforms		Faecal Coliforms	
	Pos.	av. orgs. per 100 ml.	Pos.	av. orgs. per 100 ml.
275	13	3	4	2

Cases where coliforms are found are referred to the Water Department for further investigations. No evidence of pollution dangerous to health was discovered.

#### (B) UNTREATED RAW WATER

46 samples were taken from the Borough Pumping Station. The following table shows the results of these samples.

Presumptive coliforms per 100 ml.		Faecal coliforms per 100 ml.	
Highest	Lowest	Highest	Lowest
1,800+	5	1,800+	5

The results are to be expected for a low-land river such as the Ouse.

#### (C) SUPPLY TO DWELLING HOUSES

All houses are supplied from public water mains direct except 7 houses by 2 wells and 12 supplied by 7 standpipes.

#### (D) SWIMMING BATHS AND PADDLING POOL

Samples were taken from six officially controlled or generally recognised bathing places in the river and one paddling pool. The results are as follows.

No. of samples	Presumptive coliforms per 100 ml.		Faecal coliforms per 100 ml.	
	Highest	Lowest	Highest	Lowest
86	1,800+	170	1,800+	35

The results are comparable to those shown above of samples taken of the raw water before treatment at the waterworks.

In my opinion these results are not satisfactory and an increasing volume of the flow is derived from sewage effluents. This problem is now under review.

## IV. HOUSING

### 1. General

For details of the work carried out under the Housing and Public Health Acts reference is made to the report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

The following list shows in summary form the work undertaken in dealing with totally unfit houses or parts of houses.

#### UNFIT DWELLINGS

Number of houses or parts of houses represented to Local Authority as unfit and incapable of being made fit at a reasonable expense ... ..	5
Number of houses represented in 1955 or in a previous year in respect of which demolition orders were made	1
Number of houses demolished as a result of Demolition Orders served in a previous year ... ..	8*
Number of houses demolished by arrangement with owner, including properties owned by the Corporation, without formal representation or demolition order ...	26
Number of houses or parts of houses represented in 1955 or a previous year, on which Closing Orders made became operative ... ..	3

---

\* Includes one on which a Demolition Order was not made but which formed part of the block.



## 2. New Units of Accommodation

During the years 1945 to 1955 the following numbers and type of new units of accommodation were completed.

### NEW DWELLINGS AND CONVERSIONS, 1945-1955.

	(1) Prefabricated Dwellings (Council)		(2) Permanent Dwellings (Council)	(3) Permanent Houses erected by Builders	(4) Conversions: Houses into Flats		(5) Other Adaptations. Additional units of accommodation	(6) Total additional units of accommodation provided
	Tem- porary	Perma- nent			(i)	(ii)		
1945-1954 Totals	180	158	1,527	424	113	255	8	2,439
1955 ...	—	—	246	179	9	23	—	439
Totals ...	180	158	1,773	603	122	278	8	2,878

NOTES—The totals in column (6) are obtained by adding the figures in columns (1), (2), (3) and (5) as they stand, and in the case of column (4) by subtracting the figures in column (i) from those in column (ii) to find the number to be included in the total. This last procedure may not always be quite accurate, but gives a sufficient approximation.

There are now no requisitioned houses and figures included in previous reports relating to these have been omitted.

### **3. Housing Requirements**

I am informed by the Housing Manager that the number of applicants for houses on the books of the Corporation at the end of the year was 1,579. In spite of the large number of houses built since the war the number of applicants for houses shows no permanent reduction.



## V. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

### 1. Milk

#### (A) DAIRIES AND DISTRIBUTORS

The following table gives the register of dairies and distributors as it stood at the end of the year.

Premises registered as dairies in the area	...	...	14
Milk distributors registered in area—			
(i) trading from premises within area	...	...	15
(ii) trading from premises outside area only	...	...	5
			—
Total	...	...	20
			==

#### (B) MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATION) (RAW MILK) REGULATIONS, 1949 MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATION) (PASTEURISED AND STERILIZED MILK) REGULATIONS, 1949

The following table shows the licences granted under the above named Orders.

				<i>Number of Licences</i>	
				<i>Pasteurised</i>	<i>Milk</i>
				<i>Raw Milk</i>	<i>Milk</i>
Tuberculin tested—Dealers	...	...	...	13*	13
Supplementary	...	...	...	3	3

The following table shows the results of the laboratory examinations of specially designated milk. To speak generally the results obtained from samples of specially designated milk are satisfactory. When any failure to maintain the required standard occurs the Inspector is ready to advise.

Source	Grade	No. of Samples	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory
Dairy ...	Pasteurised ...	17	14	3
Roundsmen ...	Pasteurised ...	32	31	1
Schools ...	Pasteurised ...	78	67	11
Works Canteen	... ..	1	1	—
Totals ...	... ..	128	113	15

Investigations were undertaken in the cases of samples reported upon as not satisfactory and subsequent samples were satisfactory.

\* Two of these licences were in respect of establishments in the area at which pasteurising was carried out. All of the dealers dealt in Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised) Milk.

## 2. Meat

### (A) INSPECTION

The following table shows the number of carcasses inspected and the meat condemned during the year.

#### CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED, 1955

	Cattle (exclud- ing Cows)	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Total
Number killed and inspected ...	2,326	347	919	4,695	7,510	15,797
<b>All Diseases except Tuberculosis—</b> Whole carcasses con- demned ...	—	—	1	4	4	9
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned ...	465	47	79	55	1,164	1,810
Percentage of num- ber inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	19.99	13.54	8.71	1.26	15.55	11.51
<b>Tuberculosis only—</b> Whole carcasses con- demned ...	2	2	1	—	2	7
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned ...	91	41	1	—	47	180
Percentage of num- ber inspected affected with tuberculosis ...	4.0	12.39	0.21	—	0.65	1.18

## MEAT WEIGHT CONDEMNED

The following table shows the total weight of diseased and unsound home killed meat condemned in 1955.

Class of Animal	Tuberculosis			Other Diseases			Total lbs.
	Whole Carcase	Part Carcase and Offal	lbs.	Whole Carcase	Part Carcase and Offal	lbs.	
Cattle (excluding Cows) ...	2	91	4,426	—	465	6,007	10,433
Cows ...	2	41	2,334	—	47	792	3,126
Calves ...	1	1	95	1	79	289	384
Sheep and Lambs	—	—	—	4	55	376	376
Pigs ...	2	47	1,020	4	1,164	2,953	3,973
Totals ...	7	180	7,875	9	1,810	10,417	18,292

### (B) SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Eight slaughterhouses were licensed by the Council for use by private butchers.

### (C) SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933

#### SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1954

At the end of December, 1955, there were 32 slaughtermen licensed under these Acts.

## 3. Other Foods

The following table shows the amount of foods condemned:—

<i>Class of Food</i>								<i>lbs.</i>
Bacon ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Butter ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Cake ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Cheese ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,398
Chickens ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36
Confectionery ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	72
Continental Sausages	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	60
Cooked Meats ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	16½
Dried Fruit ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	60
Fish ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	415½
<i>Carried forward</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,092



<i>Class of Food</i>							<i>lbs.</i>
<i>Brought forward</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,092
Fish Cakes	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Pig Kidneys (one box)	...	...	...	...	...	...	28
Poultry	...	...	...	...	...	...	190
Rabbits	...	...	...	...	...	...	60
Sausages	...	...	...	...	...	...	179
Shell Fish	...	...	...	...	...	...	56
Tinned Goods—various commodities (3,579 containers)							5,708
Turkey	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Total lbs. ...							<u>8,328</u>

The bulk of this unfit food was used for animal feeding purposes, but that which was unsuitable for this purpose was buried at controlled tipping refuse sites.

#### 4. Ice Cream

The following statement shows the number of premises registered under the Food and Drugs Act for the sale of ice cream.

PREMISES REGISTERED							
Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Sale of ice cream manufactured elsewhere	...	...	...	...	...	...	161
Total							<u>164</u>

The following table shows the results of testing of ice cream in accordance with the agreed bacterial standards.

						<i>Number of samples</i>	<i>Percentage in grades</i>
Grade 1	...	...	...	...	...	12	50%
Grade 2	...	...	...	...	...	11	46%
Grade 3	...	...	...	...	...	1	4%
Grade 4	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Total						<u>24</u>	

#### 5. Adulteration of Foods

##### (A) SAMPLES SENT TO PUBLIC ANALYST

Sixty-two samples of milk and forty samples of other foods and medicinal preparations were submitted to the Public Analyst.

A summary of samples procured is shown in the following table:—

TABLE OF SAMPLES TAKEN

Commodity	Number of samples						
	Formal			Informal			Total
	Gen- uine	Adult- erated	Total	Gen- uine	Adult- erated	Total	
Aspirin ... ..	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
Butter ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Cascara Sagrada ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Castor Oil ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
French Mustard ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Glycerine, Lemon and Ipecac Balsam ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Ground Almonds ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Halibut Liver Oil Capsules	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Horseradish with Vita Cream	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Ice Cream ... ..	—	—	—	8	—	8	8
Indian Brandee ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Lard ... ..	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
Lemon Icing Sugar ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Lung Syrup ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Margarine ... ..	—	—	—	3	—	3	3
Milk ... ..	62	—	62	—	—	—	62
Mixed Peel—cut ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Olive Oil ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Pepper ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Pork Pie ... ..	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
*Pork Sausage ... ..	—	—	—	2	2	4	4
Powdered Glucose ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Shredded Beef Suet ... ..	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
Syrup of Figs ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Vinegar ... ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Totals ... ..	62	—	62	38	2	40	102

\* See following table for details of these samples.

ADULTERATED SAMPLES

Serial Number of Sample		Commodity	Nature of Adulteration	Remarks as to action taken
Formal	Informal			
	C 510	Pork Sausages	Sulphur Dioxide Preservative 210 parts per 1,000,000	No offence. Presence of Preservative declared on label at time of sale
	C 665	Pork Sausages	Sulphur Dioxide Preservative 270 parts per 1,000,000	No offence. Presence of Preservative declared on label at time of sale



## (B) GERBER TESTING OF MILK

Samples of milk are also tested in the Public Health Department by the Gerber Test, which gives a rapid indication of the quality of the milk tested and enables the Inspector either to give advice to the retailer or producer, or to take further samples for submission to the Public Analyst

The following are the figures for the year.

Total number tested	...	...	...	47
Satisfactory	...	...	...	25
Not satisfactory	...	...	...	22

## (C) UNSOUND FOOD, OR OTHERWISE NOT UP TO STANDARD

In addition to the articles sent to the Public Analyst, the following table gives a list of food, unsound or unsatisfactory in other ways, to which the Public Health Committee give consideration.

Article of Food	Source of complaint	Nature of contamination	Action taken
Milk ...	Private individual	Dirty milk bottle	Further investigation made and vendors advised
Bread . ...	Private individual	Containing portion of soiled bandage	Legal action authorised. Vendors fined £5
Lemonade ...	Private individual	Bottles contained water, not lemonade	Vendor cautioned
Pork Pie ...	Private individual	Containing fly	Vendor cautioned
Lemonade ...	Private individual	Glass in lemonade	No legal action. Vendor warned
Fruit Malt Loaf	Private individual	Containing part of label from malted meal sack	Legal action authorised. Complainant not willing to give evidence. Vendor cautioned

## (D) MEAT CONTENT OF SAUSAGES

After the relinquishing of control the Ministry of Food asked for information relating to the quality of sausages. Samples were, in consequence, sent to the Public Analyst, and the meat content of the sausages examined has been as follows:—

<i>Number of sample</i>	<i>Nature of sample</i>				<i>Meat content</i>
C 665	Pork	...	...	...	64%
C 691	Pork	...	...	...	67%
C 510	Pork	...	...	...	72%
C 526	Pork Chipolata	...	...	...	72%

The legal standard of sausages before the end of control was 65% for pork and 55% for beef.

## 6. Dried Egg Albumen

Nine samples of this commodity were taken during the year, of which three were reported upon to the effect that no organism of the Salmonella group was isolated. Six of the samples were reported upon as containing Salmonella Thompson and the stocks from which these were taken from the traders were returned to the suppliers.

## VI. PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

### 1. Infectious Diseases, other than Tuberculosis

#### (A) GENERAL STATISTICS

The following table shows in summary form the number of infectious diseases notified during the year, together with the number of deaths from these diseases.

#### DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1955

Disease	Total cases notified	Total deaths registered
Scarlet Fever ... ..	18	—
Whooping Cough ... ..	48	—
Diphtheria ... ..	—	—
Measles ... ..	1,128	—
Acute Pneumonia ... ..	88	20
Meningococcal Infection ... ..	3	—
Acute Poliomyelitis—		
Paralytic ... ..	2	1
Non-Paralytic ... ..	—	—
Acute Encephalitis—		
Infective ... ..	2	—
Post Infectious ... ..	1	—
Dysentery ... ..	8	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ... ..	2	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..	13	—
Smallpox ... ..	—	—
Paratyphoid Fever ... ..	—	—
Typhoid Fever ... ..	—	—
Food Poisoning ... ..	37	—
Jaundice ... ..	9	—
Erysipelas ... ..	5	—
Malaria ... ..	—	—
Influenzal Meningitis (Local requirement only)	—	—



The following table gives the number of infectious diseases notified divided into groups of age and sex.

		Scarlet Fever	Whooping Cough	Acute Poliomyelitis		Measles	Diphtheria
				Paralytic	Non-Paralytic		
Under 1 year	...	M 1	M 3	M	F	M 16	M
1 to 2 years	...	F —	F 3	F —	F —	F 22	F —
3 to 4 years	...	—	2	—	—	124	—
5 to 9 years	...	1	7	—	—	144	—
10 to 14 years	...	3	8	—	—	253	—
15 to 24 years	...	1	—	—	—	3	—
25 years and over	...	1	1	1	—	4	—
Age unknown	...	—	—	—	—	2	—
Total (all ages)	...	12	25	1	—	576	—
		Dysentery	Smallpox	Acute Encephalitis		Enteric or Typhoid fever	Paratyphoid fevers
				Infective	Post-infectious		
Under 5 years	...	M 4	M —	M —	F —	M —	M —
5 to 14 years	...	F 1	F —	F —	F —	F —	F —
15 to 44 years	...	—	—	1	—	—	—
45 to 64 years	...	—	—	—	—	—	—
56 years and over	...	1	—	—	—	—	—
Age unknown	...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total (all ages)	...	5	—	1	—	—	—
		Erysipelas	Food poisoning	Puerperal Pyrexia	Ophthalmia neonatorum	Jaundice	Malaria
Under 5 years	...	M —	M —	M —	F 1	M —	M —
5 to 14 years	...	F —	F —	F —	F —	F 1	F —
15 to 44 years	...	—	17	—	—	—	—
45 to 64 years	...	1	15	13	—	2	—
65 years and over	...	—	1	—	—	2	—
Age unknown	...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total (all ages)	...	2	33	13	1	4	—



## (B) INDIVIDUAL DISEASES

### *Scarlet Fever*

During the year 18 cases only occurred in contrast with 30 in the previous year, giving a case rate of 0·32 in comparison with 0·75 for England and Wales.

### *Whooping Cough*

48 cases only occurred in contrast with 52 in 1954.

### *Diphtheria*

No cases occurred for the eighth year in succession, a result which may be attributed to the success of the immunisation campaign.

### *Measles*

During the year measles was epidemic, 1,128 cases having been notified.

### *Pneumonia*

88 cases were notified with 20 deaths.

### *Meningococcal Infections*

Three cases of meningococcal meningitis or other meningococcal infections were notified.

### *Acute Poliomyelitis*

Two cases of acute poliomyelitis were notified, both of which were paralytic.

A boy aged 3½ years was taken ill while staying with his grandmother at Croydon, Surrey, and it is believed that the disease was contracted there.

The second case was of a woman aged 35 years. She died the day following removal to hospital. It is not known how the disease was contracted.

### *Dysentery*

Eight cases only were notified in contrast to five in 1954.

### *Food Poisoning*

37 cases of food poisoning were notified.

### *Jaundice*

Nine cases were notified, the same number as in the previous year.

### *Influenza*

This disease was not prevalent during the year, and no deaths were attributable to it.

## 2. Tuberculosis

The following table shows the number of new cases and the number of deaths in their age groups.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CASES AND DEATHS

Age Periods				New Cases				Deaths			
				Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
				M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	...	...	...	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
5	...	...	...	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	...	...	...	2	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
15	...	...	...	3	8	—	1	—	—	—	—
20	...	...	...	3	7	2	—	—	—	1	—
25	...	...	...	6	10	—	1	—	—	—	—
35	...	...	...	4	3	—	1	—	1	1	—
45	...	...	...	2	2	—	—	1	—	—	—
55	...	...	...	3	1	—	2	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards	...	...	...	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals				27	34	3	7	1	1	2	—

There were four deaths due to tuberculosis, two from the respiratory type and two non-respiratory, corresponding to a death rate of 0·07 per thousand which may be compared with the rate of 0·15 for England and Wales.

TUBERCULOSIS—CASES NOTIFIED DURING LAST 5 YEARS

Year	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Total
	M	F	M	F	
1951	33	29	7	3	72
1952	38	33	5	2	78
1953	48	25	3	4	80
1954	25	26	1	7	59
1955	27	34	3	7	71

The table for the last 5 years shows the decline in the death rate which has taken place in Bedford and the country generally. The decline in the number of cases notified has not kept pace with the decline in the number of deaths, and shows that preventive measures should be continued with greater energy. The emergence of strains of tubercle bacilli resistant to the drugs and antibiotics now in use underlines the importance of these new cases.

# TUBERCULOSIS DEATH RATES

Year	All Forms			Respiratory			Non-Respiratory		
	No. in Bedford	Rate per 1,000		No. in Bedford	Rate per 1,000		No. in Bedford	Rate per 1,000	
		Bedford	England and Wales		Bedford	England and Wales		Bedford	England and Wales
1951	13	0·24	0·31	12	0·22	0·27	1	0·02	0·04
1952	9	0·17	0·24	9	0·17	0·21	0	—	0·04
1953	8	0·15	0·20	8	0·15	0·18	0	—	0·02
1954	6	0·11	0·18	6	0·11	0·16	0	—	0·02
1955	4	0·07	0·15	2	0·04	0·13	2	0·04	0·01
Average 1950-55	8	0·15	0·22	7	0·14	0·19	0·6	0·01	0·03

## 3. Verminous Infestation

Since the end of the war scabies has disappeared from the Borough so that the Cleansing Station is now confined to treating cases of verminous infestation either of bodies or of heads. The services are available on payment by the Local Education Authority and by other sanitary districts of the County. Their use is now limited to exceptional cases where for some reason or other verminous infestation has got out of hand or cleansing cannot be expected to be carried out by the person affected or by the parents of children.

The following table shows the work carried out during the year.

NUMBER OF PERSONS AND VERMINOUS HEADS EXAMINED AND TREATED AT THE CLEANSING STATION DURING 1955

	Bedford	County
Pre-School Children ... ..	—	2
School Children ... ..	6	7
Adults ... ..	—	3

(County cases: 1 adult, 2 school children and 1 infant were repeat cases.)



## VII. MISCELLANEOUS

### (A) CARE OF THE AGED

The care of the aged continues to occupy a good deal of the time of the staff of the Public Health Department. When old people are not receiving adequate care from their families or other persons the policy is of bringing all services to bear, including those administered by the County Council, to prevent such deterioration of conditions as would make removal to hospital necessary. This result can often be achieved by the combined work of the Sanitary Inspectors, the Health Visitors, District Nurses, and the Home Help Service. It was necessary in 1955 to apply for a Magistrate's Order for compulsory removal in one case.

### (B) MORTUARY

The following table shows the work done in connection with the Mortuary. The total number of bodies received, 119, showed an increase on that of the previous year, 92. Almost half the number of bodies received came from outside areas.

#### BODIES RECEIVED

Post Mortems Carried Out			Post Mortems Not Carried Out		
Bodies received from Borough	Bodies received from other areas	Total	Bodies received from Borough	Bodies received from other areas	Total
66	44	110	6	3	9

Total bodies received—119

### (C) DOMESTIC BATHS, COMMERCIAL ROAD

The following table shows the attendances made during the year as compared with 1954. The figures show little change from year to year.

				1955	1954
Men	...	...	...	1,094	1,164
Women	...	...	...	503	475
				<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
Total	...	...	...	1,597	1,639
				<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>

It will be observed that there was a decrease of 42 attendances in the 1955 figures over those for the previous year.





BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

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# REPORT

OF THE

# Chief Sanitary Inspector

**For the Year 1955**



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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,

TOWN HALL,

BEDFORD

*April, 1956.*

TO HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR,  
ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS OF THE  
BOROUGH OF BEDFORD.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting my Annual Report for the year 1955, the twenty-seventh as your Chief Sanitary Inspector.

The death of Dr. G. K. Bowes, the Medical Officer of Health, in October, 1955, was deeply felt by all members of the staff, and I desire to record my respects to a man under whom I had the honour to serve for many years. He was always helpful and ever ready to give guidance in one's duties, and in writing this report I desire to honour his memory.

The report shows the wide range of duties undertaken by Sanitary Inspectors, and in their many spheres of duty they have endeavoured to maintain the services, for which they are responsible, in a very satisfactory manner.

Great difficulty was experienced in replacing a Sanitary Inspector who left in November, 1954, and the vacancy was not filled until February of 1956. A second vacancy which occurred in September last is still not filled, but the services of a trainee in the Department are being used, and it is hoped that on passing the Sanitary Inspectors' examination he will be able to fill this vacancy.

The increasing number of foreign residents in the town has taken up a considerable amount of time in order to ensure that housing conditions, etc., are satisfactory. This has been a difficult problem, but I am pleased to say that as a result of continual inspections and advice improvements in the standard of living are taking place.

I record my sincere thanks to the members of the Council, particularly those on the Public Health Committee, for their appreciation and co-operation in the work undertaken; to the Medical Officer of Health, the Deputy Medical Officer of Health, and other Chief Officers for their help and advice. I also express my appreciation to my Deputy, the Sanitary Inspectors, clerical and manual staff for their willing and loyal support at all times.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

F. C. HAYNES,

*Chief Sanitary Inspector.*

# Annual Report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

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## I. SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

This report shows the nature of the duties carried out by the Sanitary Inspectors during the year 1955, and includes particulars of sanitary inspections in the area; in conjunction with details referred to in the report of the Medical Officer of Health relating to Housing (Section IV), and Inspection and Supervision of Food (Section V).

### 1. Summary of General Inspections and Administrative Duties

#### Housing

Houses inspected under the Housing Act, 1936	...	...	60
Houses requiring repairs	...	...	54*
Houses totally unfit for human habitation	...	...	1
Parts of buildings unfit for human habitation	...	...	4
Houses repaired	...	...	112
Premises inspected under the Public Health Act, 1936	...	...	133
Premises where nuisances discovered	...	...	164
Premises where nuisances abated	...	...	136
Revisits to houses under Housing and Public Health Acts	...	...	1,664

#### Overcrowding

Visits	...	...	...	...	28
Houses found to be overcrowded	...	...	...	...	2

#### Infectious Diseases

Investigations undertaken	...	...	...	...	55
---------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

#### Verminous and Other Conditions

Visits to verminous premises	...	...	...	...	50
------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

#### Drainage

House drains tested on payment of fee	...	...	...	2
Drains tested or inspected on complaint	...	...	...	124
Revisits during repairs or reconstruction	...	...	...	222

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\* Includes 4 on which final notices were served in previous years but which were re-inspected for purposes of the serving of statutory notices.

## Visits to

Houses Let in Lodgings	...	...	...	...	...	...	908
Movable Dwellings, Caravans, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	81
Public Houses	...	...	...	...	...	...	175
Hotels	...	...	...	...	...	...	37
Restaurants	...	...	...	...	...	...	112
Fish Frying Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,986
Cowsheds, Dairies and Milkshops	...	...	...	...	...	...	109
Other Shops and Premises where Food is prepared, stored or exposed for sale	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,860
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	65
Places of Entertainment	...	...	...	...	...	...	75
Factories with mechanical power	...	...	...	...	...	...	94
Factories without mechanical power	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
Work places	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
Outworkers' premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Offices	...	...	...	...	...	...	65
Shops under Section 38, Shops Act, 1950	...	...	...	...	...	...	41
Premises where animals are kept	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Offensive trades premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Manufacturers and Stores—Rag Flock and other filling materials	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sundry nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	...	170
Miscellaneous visits	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,107
Borough Mortuary	...	...	...	...	...	...	72
Baths and Treatment Centre	...	...	...	...	...	...	5

## Food and Drugs

### Samples submitted to Public Analyst:—

Milk	...	...	...	...	...	...	62
Ice Cream	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Other foods and drugs	...	...	...	...	...	...	32

### Samples examined by the Public Health Laboratory Service:—

Milk	...	...	...	...	...	...	128
Ice Cream	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
Dried Egg Albumen	...	...	...	...	...	...	9

### Samples examined at the Public Health Department:—

Milk	...	...	...	...	...	...	47
------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

Total number of samples obtained for examination	...	...	...	...	...	...	310
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

## Rats and Mice Destruction

Inspection of premises by Sanitary Inspectors	...	...	...	...	...	122
Inspection of premises by Rodent Operators	...	...	...	...	...	1,543
Visits for treatment, including revisits	...	...	...	...	...	1,575

## Rent Restriction Acts

Investigations and interviews	...	...	...	...	...	311
-------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----



## Smoke Abatement

Observations made	...	...	...	...	...	...	125
Interviews with managers, stokers, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Inspection of boiler plant	...	...	...	...	...	...	9

## Merchandise Marks Act

Visits to traders' premises, stalls and vehicles	...	...	...	...	...	953
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

## General and Office Routine

Visits for interviews with owners, agents, builders, tenants, etc.	1,726
Interviews at office with owners, agents, builders, tenants, etc.	2,405

## General Administration

					<i>Informal</i>	<i>Formal</i>
Notices served:—						
Housing Act	...	...	...	...	50	19
Public Health Act	...	...	...	...	119*	43
Shops Act	...	...	...	...	—	—
Factories Act	...	...	...	...	9	—
Food and Drugs Act	...	...	...	...	16	—
Houses let in lodgings	...	...	...	...	55	17
Total number of notices served					249	79

\* Includes 2 verbal notices.

## 2. Detailed Nature of Work carried out as a Result of Inspections

### (A) DWELLING HOUSES

#### General Improvements

Defective roofs repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	58
Eaves gutters and downspouts repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	40
Damp walls remedied	...	...	...	...	54
Defective walls, brickwork and pointing made sound	...	...	...	...	14
Rooms cleansed and redecorated	...	...	...	...	76
Defective floors repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	27
Defective windows repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	68
Defective doors repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	20
Defective firegrates repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	20
Defective stair treads repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	1
Handrails provided to stairs	...	...	...	...	6
Defective coppers repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	1
Glazed sinks provided in lieu of defective sinks	...	...	...	...	9
Sinks and waste pipes repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	10
Chimney heads or pots repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	34



## Water Closets

Structural works undertaken	...	...	...	...	...	47
New compartments built	...	...	...	...	...	1
Separated from barns	...	...	...	...	...	9
Pedestal pans provided in lieu of defective pans	...	...	...	...	...	42
Fittings repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	...	17

## Outhouses

Outhouses repaired	...	...	...	...	...	39
Outhouses demolished	...	...	...	...	...	5

## Yards

Houses at which paving was repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	...	14
Nuisances arising from keeping of animals	...	...	...	...	...	6
Sanitary dustbins provided	...	...	...	...	...	56

## Infectious and other Diseases

Rooms and contents disinfected	...	...	...	...	...	17
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## Disinfestation

Rooms and contents disinfested	...	...	...	...	...	55
--------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

## (B) OTHER HOUSING ACCOMMODATION

### Houses Let in Lodgings

Additional sinks provided	...	...	...	...	...	12
W.C. compartments repaired	...	...	...	...	...	5
Pedestal pans fixed in lieu of defective pans	...	...	...	...	...	2
Additional cooking stoves provided	...	...	...	...	...	6
Food store provided	...	...	...	...	...	1
Other improvements	...	...	...	...	...	4

## (C) FOOD PREMISES

### Public Houses and Hotels

W.Cs. provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Urinals provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Washbasins provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Sinks provided in bar	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Waste pipes provided to sinks in bar	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Rooms cleansed and redecorated	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Other improvements	...	...	...	...	...	...	3

### Food Preparing Rooms

General cleansing and redecoration	...	...	...	...	...	5
Washbasins provided	...	...	...	...	...	5
W.C. compartments cleansed	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sanitary dustbins provided	...	...	...	...	...	—
Hot water supply provided	...	...	...	...	...	1
New fittings provided	...	...	...	...	...	2
Other defects remedied	...	...	...	...	...	2

## Cowsheds and Dairies

Dairies at which improvements made	...	...	...	...	—
Dairies and cowsheds where limewashing and general cleansing undertaken	...	...	...	...	—

## Slaughterhouses

Regular periodic limewashing and general cleansing	...	...	8
Other improvements	...	...	3

## (D) OTHER PREMISES

### Offices

Rooms cleansed and redecorated	...	...	...	—
W.Cs. repaired or renewed	...	...	...	—
Other improvements	...	...	...	—

### Factories

Sanitary accommodation requirements complied with:—							
(a) Provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
(b) Repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
Regular periodic limewashing and general cleansing	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Other defects remedied	...	...	...	...	...	...	12

### Smoke Abatements

Structural improvements	...	...	...	...	1
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### Shops

W.Cs. repaired, etc.	...	...	...	...	2
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### Drainage (all premises)

Drains repaired	...	...	...	...	133
Drains wholly relaid	...	...	...	...	9
Blocked drains cleared	...	...	...	...	248

## II. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

### 1. Housing

#### (A) HOUSING ACT, 1936

##### (i) Section 9—Repair

Systematic housing inspection was not undertaken, and generally only detailed inspection of houses was carried out following complaints by tenants, in view of the present difficulties of owners of obtaining the services of builders to undertake repair work as the majority of building labour is engaged in the erection of houses and industrial premises. On account of this, considerable delay in repair work has occurred during the past few years.

Of the 55 houses inspected all, except one, required work of repair to be undertaken, and informal notices were served upon the owners; in most cases the work has been completed or instructions have been given to builders. In six instances it was found necessary to serve statutory notices, five of which were complied with while the works were put in hand in the remaining one. It was also necessary to serve 13 statutory notices in respect of houses on which informal notices were made in previous years and which were not complied with. These were all complied with, and it may be noted that the work in two cases was completed after purchase of the property by the Corporation.

The following table shows action taken following service of formal notices. This table includes 7 outstanding from 1954.

Situation of Property	Year of Statutory Notice	Work carried out by owner	Work carried out by L.A. in default	Cost
				£ s. d.
12, 14, 28 Battison Street	1955	No	Yes	192 19 0
26, Battison Street ...	1955	Yes	—	—
19, Russell Street ...	1955	Yes	—	—
*58, 60, Queen Street ...	1954	No	Yes	109 8 0
*21, 23, Western Street ...	1954	No	Yes	112 4 0
*1, St. Michael's Road ...	1954	Yes	—	—
*3, 5, Maitland Street ...	1954	Yes	—	—
*36, 38, Pilcroft Street ...	1955	No	Purchased by Local Authority, and repairs carried out by Housing Dept.	

\* Inspected in 1954.



(ii) Section 11—Demolition Orders

One Demolition Order was made in respect of Lodge Cottage, Putnoe Street, in September, and the owner has made arrangements for the vacant house to be demolished in 1956.

The work of demolition of the 8 houses in Balsall Street East (on seven of which Demolition Orders were served) which commenced in the latter part of 1954 has now been completed.

(iii) Houses Demolished without recourse to Formal Action

The following schedule gives details of houses demolished without recourse to formal action.

Situation	Number	Remarks	
2, 4, 6, 8, 10, Thurlow Street ...	5	In re-development scheme	Corporation property
18, Allhallows Lane ... ..	1		
2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 13, Dane Street ... ..	12		
32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, Church Square	6		
3, 4, Thatched Cottages, Clapham Road ... ..	2		

(iv) Section 12—Closing Orders

The following houses or parts of houses were represented as being unfit for human habitation and the table shows the action taken.

Situation	Accommodation concerned	Date of Representation	Date of Closing Order
35a, Garfield Street ...	Dwelling and workshop	4. 1.55	9.5.55
6, Newnham Street ...	Rooms over shop	3. 3.55	19.5.55
*1, Brace Street ...	House	18. 8.55	—
*33, Alexandra Road ...	Basement rooms	25.11.55	—
†7, Gwyn Street ...	Rooms over shop	—	3.5.55

\* Closing Order in 1956.

† Represented in 1954.



## (B) HOUSING REPAIRS AND RENTS ACT, 1954

### (i) Survey—Unfit Houses

In order to comply with the request of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government that proposals should be submitted to him by August of the Authority's proposals in connection with unfit houses, the general inspection of the area which commenced in September, 1954 was continued and completed early in 1955, and subsequently a report by the Medical Officer of Health was made and submitted to the Public Health Committee in which it was considered that 305 houses should be regarded as unfit for human habitation, this figure including 80 temporary M.A.P. bungalows.

A proposed programme spread over a period of five years for the demolition of these houses has been prepared as follows:—

<i>Year</i>			<i>Number of houses</i>
1955/56 ...	...	...	70*
1956/57 ...	...	...	41
1957/58 ...	...	...	53
1958/59 ...	...	...	71
1959/60 ...	...	...	70
Total ...	...	...	<hr/> 305 <hr/>

\* Includes 24 now demolished, 6 closed and awaiting demolition, and 3 closed and now used as stores.

It is hoped that the prepared programme will be undertaken subject to alternative accommodation being available.

### (ii) Certificates of Disrepair

Three applications for Certificates of Disrepair were made and submitted to the sub-committee of the Public Health Committee appointed for that purpose, and after consideration of reports made by the Inspectors the Certificates were issued.

One Certificate of Revocation has been issued on completion of the necessary works of repair to the house concerned.

Since the coming into force of the Act only five applications for Certificates of Disrepair have been made. It was anticipated that many applications would be received, but when owners or agents realised the possible consequence of raising rents of houses they have been very reluctant to take any further action. It thus appears that this provision of the Act is practically ineffective due to the high cost of repair and the rents which could be levied. As soon as houses become vacant owners prefer to sell at a good profit in preference to letting.

### (iii) Houses Let in Lodgings

At the end of the year 226 premises occupied as Houses Let in Lodgings were known to the Public Health Department, mainly in the occupation of foreign nationals. The majority of these premises are situated in the residential areas of the Borough.

The following schedule gives details relating to various nationalities known to be occupying houses let in lodgings, together with the number of rooms and occupants.

Nationality	Number of rooms	Families				Single Persons	
		No.	Adult	Children	Rooms	No.	Rooms
Italian ...	829	371	757	285	448	657	381
Polish ...	181	54	113	55	99	106	82
British ...	330	109	221	54	264	57	66
Irish ...	75	19	40	15	40	52	35
American ...	23	9	18	4	22	2	1
Yugoslav ...	56	18	42	13	30	32	26
Ukranian ...	26	6	12	9	10	21	16
Russian ...	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
Latvian ...	46	4	8	4	8	43	38
Lithuanian ...	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
Estonian ...	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
German ...	6	1	2	2	1	6	5
Hungarian ...	3	1	2	—	1	2	2
Czechoslovakian	4	4	8	3	4	—	—
Roumanian ...	2	2	4	1	2	—	—
Albanian ...	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
Maltese ...	2	1	2	—	1	2	1
Greek ...	6	4	8	3	5	2	1
Dutch ...	2	1	2	1	2	—	—
Indian ...	10	—	—	—	—	25	10
Totals ...	1,605	604	1,239	449	937	1,011	668



Number of Common Rooms (not used for sleeping)	156
Total number of Rooms ... ..	1,761
Number of Premises ... ..	226
Number of Sinks ... ..	449
Number of Cookers ... ..	512
Number of W.Cs. ... ..	410
Total number of Persons accommodated ... ..	2,699

On inspection of the premises it was found necessary to serve 43 informal notices requiring the provision of additional amenities, and 12 informal notices in respect of overcrowding. Subsequently, statutory notices were served in 11 cases relating to the provision of amenities and 6 in respect of overcrowding. At some houses the number of occupants was reduced and it was therefore not necessary to provide the additional amenities, whilst in most other cases the works were completed or were in progress at the end of the year.

### *Legal Proceedings*

In one instance legal proceedings were instituted in respect of non-compliance with formal notices requiring the provision of additional amenities and the abatement of overcrowding. At an adjourned hearing of the cases the summons regarding amenities was dismissed as the claim of the defence that evidence in respect of the foreign occupants was partly non-admissible was upheld by the Magistrates. However, the owner of the house has now provided an additional W.C. compartment. Regarding the overcrowding summons, the case was proved and the defendant fined £3. This overcrowding has now been abated.

### *Certificates—Availability of Accommodation*

Following upon request from the Local Authority arrangements have now been made that before Italian families are allowed to enter this country the accommodation they propose to occupy is inspected by this Department, and if suitable a certificate is issued for presentation to the Immigration Officer on arrival in England. This scheme commenced in October and by the end of the year 59 applications had been received, of which 45 were approved, 13 refused, and one was withdrawn. I am of the opinion that this scheme has achieved some improvement in the standard of accommodation occupied by foreign nationals. Nevertheless, cases occur where families arrive in England and proceed to a different address than that shown on the certificate. This question has been raised by the Aliens Department of the local Police Headquarters and has now been referred to the Home Office.

### *Furnished Accommodation—Rents*

As pointed out in the previous year's report, in my opinion the rents being charged for some of the accommodation occupied by foreign nationals were excessive. This question was considered by the Committee towards the end of the year with the result that it is proposed to carry out investigations, and if approved by a sub-committee to submit cases to the Rent Tribunal for their consideration. It was only found possible to complete investigations at one house by the end of the year, but since that date several cases have been dealt with by the Tribunal.

### *Rent Books*

As it was felt that aliens were being exploited by some landlords through the rents being charged, and in view of the difficulty being experienced in obtaining information as to the amount being paid each week, the Town Council decided to promote a private Bill requiring that when accommodation is let furnished to aliens a landlord must provide a rent book containing full information regarding the accommodation, services provided, and the rent. This Bill is now before the Houses of Parliament.

### *Italian Consular Agent*

It is pleasing to record that an Italian Consular Agent was appointed for Bedford and the surrounding areas, and during the year opened an office in the Borough. Toward the end of the year an Italian Welfare Officer was also appointed to the Consular Staff. Many interviews have been held with the Consular Agent and his assistant, and in view of the language difficulties their services have proved to be of great value.

### *General*

In view of the shortage of labour in the brick industry the firms concerned have continued to recruit Italians for work in the brickyards, and in the first instance the men are accommodated in hostels (available for males only) near to the brickfields. Subsequently, a large number of these men obtain accommodation in Houses Let in Lodgings in the Borough. Married men then rent one room and make application for their families to join them. Social problems have arisen, and a number of inhabitants who live in houses adjoining those occupied by foreign nationals continue to complain of noise and the depreciation in value of their property. I am of the opinion, however, that some improvement has taken place in the living standards at houses occupied as Houses Let in Lodgings, on constant pressure from this Department. There is a tendency for overcrowding to occur due to natural increase of families, and in these cases endeavours are made to obtain an additional room for the family.

After consideration by a special committee of the Town Council it was decided to purchase 8a, Tavistock Place, previously used as a Common Lodging House, and to carry out conversions so as to provide six units of accommodation, for rehousing large families living in overcrowded circumstances. This accommodation is not intended to provide permanent residence for these families, but only for a time so that they can in due course obtain suitable accommodation. Completion of purchase was made early in 1956 and work of alteration is being undertaken by the Housing Manager.

A considerable amount of time has been expended in visiting Houses Let in Lodgings in order to ensure that reasonable living standards are being maintained. This is necessary as there is a constant movement of aliens occupying these dwellings, especially as a number of Italians are buying their own houses and taking in lodgers in order to assist them in meeting their financial commitments. In all 908 visits were made to Houses Let in Lodgings during the year.



#### (iv) Overcrowding

The following table shows the position with regard to overcrowding as at 31st December, 1955.

Overcrowding cases outstanding at December, 1954	...	...	5
New cases discovered during 1955	...	...	2
			—
Total	...	...	7
			==
Number of cases abated during 1955	...	...	7
Number of cases outstanding at 31st December, 1955	...	...	—
Overcrowding discovered in 1955 was caused as follows:—			
By the tenant and family exceeding the permitted number of persons allowed to occupy the house	...	...	2

In addition to the above, 12 cases of overcrowding were discovered in rooms in houses let in lodgings, of which 10 were abated. Steps are being taken to re-house the outstanding cases.

#### (v) Purchase of Property

The policy of the purchase of houses of low standard has been continued, such houses being mainly situated in the central re-development area. 164 houses were purchased by this Department, of which 91 were unfit, 53 of low standard, and 20 others. Negotiations are still being conducted for the purchase for the Corporation of more properties in such areas. During the past few years some 440 houses have been bought by this Department for the Council.

The purchase of property by occupiers is still taking place on a fairly large scale with the result that house ownership has enabled them to carry out improvements and to maintain the houses on a higher standard. A large number of searches are made at this Department under the Land Registry Act, from which it may be assumed that property changes hands at a high rate.

#### (vi) Houses without Secondary Means of Access

It is estimated that there are 105 older type houses in which access from the yard or garden to the street can only be made by the front door, thus fuel and household refuse has to be carried through the house. A large number of these houses are situated in re-development areas and should eventually be demolished. Since last year 11 such houses have been demolished.

#### (c) HOUSING ACT, 1949

##### Improvement Grants

Under the Act it is possible to obtain financial assistance in order to effect improvements to private houses, such as provision of baths with hot water supply, washbasins with additional lavatory accommodation, or reasonable extensions to provide additional housing accommodation. The

Borough Engineer and Surveyor is responsible for the administration of this scheme, but during the course of house inspection advice has been given by the Sanitary Inspectors on the possibilities of obtaining grants for such purposes. 65 grants were made.

Most applications for improvement grants were made by owner-occupiers of houses, but landlords, with a few exceptions, do not appear to desire to take advantage of the scheme in view of restrictive rents.

(D) PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936

133 houses were inspected under the Act for minor defects or nuisances, and as a result 119 notices, including 2 verbal notices, were served. All complaints received were investigated and necessary action taken to abate nuisances discovered.

(E) HOUSING AMENITIES

(i) Baths

Plans for provision of bathrooms at 65 houses were submitted and approved. These were installed in houses occupied by owners, and for which an Improvement Grant was received under the Housing Act, 1949.

It is now estimated that there are some 4,375 houses in the Borough without fixed baths, that is 25% of the dwellings in the town. Many of these houses are situated in proposed re-development areas, or are either unfit or of low standard, and therefore the provision of baths is not reasonable.

(ii) Water Supply

The following table shows houses without internal water supply.

HOUSES WITHOUT INTERNAL WATER SUPPLY OR SINKS

Situation	Without internal water supply	Without sinks	Means of water supply
*St. John's Place (Almshouses)	4	4	4 taps in yard connected to public main
*St. Loyes Street (Almshouses)	8	8	3 taps in yard connected to public main
†Brickhill Farm Cottage ...	1	—	Well in garden
*Biddenham, Ford End ...	6	5	Well in garden
Totals ...	19	17	

\* Scheduled for demolition.

† In remote situation.



### (iii) Closet Accommodation

Apart from the exceptions quoted in the following table every house in the Borough is provided with a separate closet.

Situation	No. of houses	No. of water closets .....
*42-56 St. Loyes Street (Almshouses) ...	8	4
*7, 9, 17, 19, St. John's Place (Almshouses)	4	2
*494, 496, Goldington Road... ..	2	1
Total ... ..	14	7

\* Scheduled for demolition.

It is estimated that 440 houses, including 45 almshouses, have W.Cs. situated at the bottom of the garden or yard. W.Cs. in this situation are not ideal, especially at houses where aged persons reside.

During the year 9 W.Cs. situated in barns were made into separate compartments so as to ensure complete privacy.

All water closets have flushing cisterns.

## 2. Drainage and Sewerage

### (A) DRAINAGE

The drains at two private houses were tested on payment of a fee of 15s. per house, and following the discovery of minor defects these were duly remedied.

At 52 houses works of repair or reconstruction to the public sewers were carried out at the request of the Department and the cost of so doing was charged to the various owners.

At 63 premises work of repair or reconstruction to drains was carried out under the supervision of this Department.

At 18 houses drains were tested on complaint or on account of rat infestation, and defects were remedied. 248 Public Sewers or Drains in connection with 548 houses were found to be blocked and these have been cleared.

### (B) HOUSES AND FACTORIES NOT CONNECTED TO THE PUBLIC SEWERS

There are now 35 houses and 8 factories with no drainage to sewers. The sewer is now available for six of these houses, three of which are to be demolished and arrangements made for the three remaining houses to

be connected to the new sewer during 1956. (See table given in 1954 report.)

Two houses with drainage to cesspools have been connected to the new sewer in Putnoe Street: two thatched cottages in Clapham Road were demolished.

### **3. Household Refuse**

#### **(A) PROVISION OF SANITARY DUSTBINS**

On inspection it was found that at 56 houses there were no suitable bins for storing household refuse, and upon service of informal notices upon owners 48 were supplied. At eight houses owners failed to comply with the informal notices, and after detailed reports had been submitted to the Committee the service of formal notices was authorised. Four of these were complied with, and at the remaining four houses bins were supplied by the Local Authority, the cost being recoverable.

All the usual problems as to the responsibility of providing a dustbin still arise, and the fact that a purchase tax is now levied on the bins does cause, in some cases, hardship.

The time spent in making enquiries and having interviews with tenants, agents or owners on the provision of dustbins is very often considerable and it is my view that the Committee should reconsider the scheme for the provision of bins by the Local Authority.

#### **(B) REFUSE COLLECTION**

The collection of refuse is under the control of the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, and modern type vehicles are used. The disposal of the refuse is by tipping at disused gravel pits at Willington, beyond the Borough boundary. Trade refuse is also collected by arrangement with the Borough Engineer.

### **4. Inspection of Premises (Other than Houses)** **Public Health Act, 1936**

#### **(A) OFFICES**

It is estimated that there are at least 300 office blocks in the Borough and from observations made during inspection it can be stated that generally offices are being maintained in a satisfactory condition. So far, inspections have not revealed any offices situated in basements.

#### **(B) PUBLIC HOUSES**

Improvements continue to be made in connection with sanitary conditions to the Public Houses, and during the year extensive works of structural alteration were made to seven premises, whilst at one house works are still in progress. In a few instances, in order to secure the sanitary accommodation within the building, it has been necessary for the living accommodation to be provided on the first floor.



The following is a list of premises where extensive alterations have been completed:—

- Gordon Arms, Castle Road;
- Devonshire Arms, Dudley Street;
- Midland Hotel, Midland Road;
- Anchor, Goldington Road;
- Cross Keys, High Street;
- Cricketers' Arms, Goldington Road;
- Fenlake Anchor, Cardington Road;
- Saracen's Head, St. Paul's Square (works still in progress).

The Goat, Ampthill Street, was closed during the year, and the Sportsman, The Boundary, Putnoe Estate, was erected and opened during the year.

It is hoped that during 1956 improvement to Public Houses will be continued, especially those which are not within the areas of re-development but those that are will have to be deferred pending re-development of the central areas and road widening schemes.

The following table shows the position at the end of the year.

(i)	Now satisfactory	...	...	...	64
(ii)	Works in progress	...	...	...	1
(iii)	Plans submitted	...	...	...	4*
(iv)	Plans to be prepared	...	...	...	17*
(v)	Action deferred pending possible re-siting of premises	...	...	...	10
Total					96

\* Negotiations for improvements still in progress, but in view of the works required some time must elapse before completion.

The whole question of reducing the number of Public Houses should be given serious consideration as, in my opinion there are too many in the Borough.

(C) HOTELS, BOARDING HOUSES AND HOSTELS

In the Borough there are 8 Licensed Hotels and 4 Unlicensed premises, together with a small number of privately owned boarding houses and a few hostels.

It may be stated that generally the hotels are maintained in a satisfactory state, although it would appear that at times there is a shortage of accommodation, there being only approximately 320 beds available.

(D) CINEMAS, THEATRES AND DANCE HALLS

There is one Theatre in the Borough licensed by the Town Council, and four Cinemas licensed by the Bedfordshire County Council. In addition there is a Civic Theatre in the Town Hall.

The work of extensive structural alteration to the Theatre commenced during June, 1955, and owing to legal difficulties was suspended for a few months and re-started towards the end of the year and is still in progress.

At the Empire Cinema it has not been possible to effect improvement to the ground floor sanitary accommodation, as negotiations for the purchase by the Local Authority of that portion of the building required for road widening are still in progress, but plans for new sanitary accommodation on the north side of the cinema have been approved and will be provided on completion of the negotiations.

With regard to the Granada and Picturedrome Cinemas, these have been maintained in a satisfactory condition: at the Plaza the owner has been requested to provide additional sanitary accommodation for both sexes, and this will be provided during 1956.

On inspection of some of the buildings used for dancing and other entertainments it was generally found that they were maintained in a satisfactory condition. However, works of alteration and adaptation to the Assembly Rooms (Dance Hall) were commenced during the latter part of the year and are still in progress.

#### (E) PLACES OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT

A new sanitary block was provided at the east side of the Bedford Town Association Football Club's ground at Queen's Park on the request of this Department, and the unsatisfactory accommodation on the west side of the field is to be demolished. A new block, connected to the public sewer, is to be erected in a convenient position, and this it is hoped will be completed by the end of 1956.

#### (F) RIVER, STREAMS AND PONDS

On observation there was no evidence of pollution of the River Great Ouse which passes through the town nor was any complaint of pollution received.

In the Pilcroft Street area the King's Ditch is still a dumping place for discarded household articles and is cleaned periodically by the Borough Engineer's Department.

The stream running from Elstow Road to the river in Cardington Road still continues to be polluted, and a number of complaints regarding the obnoxious smells are continually being received from residents in the area, but as the matter is one which comes under the Borough Engineer's Department these complaints have been referred to him. On occasions the watercourse has been cleaned out, but investigations are still continuing with regard to the source of pollution, which is alleged to be effluent from a factory; until this is definitely proved the nuisance is likely to continue.



Complaints of dumping of a minor nature have been made in respect of some other small streams in the town and these have been cleaned out from time to time.

Many of the watercourses will remain unsatisfactory until it is possible to culvert them, which would be very costly.

#### (G) PLACES WHERE ANIMALS ARE KEPT

Apart from two instances of complaints of smells from piggeries situated on allotments on the outskirts of the town no nuisances were discovered or reported.

#### (H) SMOKE ABATEMENT

There are now 39 chimneys in the Borough in connection with 2 hospital laundries and 27 factories. Three new large factories came into operation during the year at which there are 4 chimneys.

On six occasions emission of black smoke beyond the permitted period of two minutes in any period of thirty minutes was noted in 125 observations. The excessive emission occurred at 5 factories, and upon investigation the managements at 3 of these stated that it was due to poor quality fuel.

The Power Station in Prebend Street, particularly in the winter months, emits black smoke in heavy quantities at times, and this is stated to be due partly to the low standard fuel and old plant, and partly to the sudden demands made for the boiler capacity to be used to its utmost to keep up the electricity supply.

A new Power Station with 2 chimneys at Barkers Lane was brought into use in the autumn, and at times heavy emission of smoke and grit has occurred. The management state that this has been due to mechanical difficulties with new plant, but it was hoped that when this is properly "run in" and suitable fuel provided no nuisance should be caused. The heavy emission from the power station was a surprise as one was informed that all the latest apparatus was being installed to prevent such emission of smoke and grit.

Generally, it may be stated that heavy smoke emission from Bedford factories is not serious, and when the attention of factory managements is drawn to nuisances they endeavour to take all reasonable steps to avoid future occurrences. The trouble, in my opinion, is due to inefficient stoking and poor quality fuel. It should be borne in mind, however, that a considerable volume of smoke is emitted from private dwellings, and the only way to avoid this would be by the installation of modern firegrates and the burning of smokeless fuel, but this at the moment is costly, and this grade of fuel is not easily obtained.

One will watch with interest the proposed new legislation now before Parliament on Clean Air.

## 5. Food and Drugs Act, 1955

This new Act, which comes into operation on the 1st January, 1956, consolidates the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, and parts of other appropriate Acts, and also the Minister under the new Act has prepared Regulations known as the Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955, which operate in part from the 1st January, 1956 and as a whole from the 1st July, 1956. More details on these Regulations will be given in next year's report as the result of inspections to be made.

## 6. Food and Drugs Act, 1938

### (A) FOOD PREMISES

The following schedule shows the number of food premises in Bedford together with their classification by type of business.

<i>Trade</i>	<i>Number in Main Trades</i>
Bakehouses ... ..	27
Banana Merchants ... ..	1
Biscuit Depots ... ..	1
Brewery and Soft Drink Manufacturers ...	3
Butchers ... ..	52
Cafes and Restaurants ... ..	32
Canteens ... ..	34
Chemists ... ..	18
Confectioners (Flour) ... ..	22
Confectioners (Sugar) ... ..	54
Corndalers and Flour ... ..	7
Clubs ... ..	15
Dairies ... ..	14
Fish Fryers ... ..	17
Fishmongers—Retail ... ..	5
—Wholesale ... ..	2
Flour Mills ... ..	1
Food Storage Depots ... ..	3
Fruiterers and Greengrocers ... ..	55
Grain Silo ... ..	1
Grocery and Provisions ... ..	172
Hotels (Licensed) ... ..	8
Public Houses ... ..	96
Slaughterhouses ... ..	8
Sweet and Chocolate Manufacturers ...	3
Off Licences—Alcoholic ... ..	16
Total ... ..	<u>667</u>



In addition there are 49 food stalls on the market square, as under:—

Confectionery	...	...	...	...	4
Fish	...	...	...	...	4
Cafe	...	...	...	...	1
Fruit and Vegetables	...	...	...	...	39
Ice Cream	...	...	...	...	1

The following table shows the number of premises registered under Section 14 of the Act for the following trades:—

Manufacture of Ice Cream	...	...	3
Storage and/or Sale of Ice Cream	...	...	161
*Preparation or manufacture of sausage, or potted, pressed, pickled or preserved food	...	...	51

A total of 278 visits were made to food premises, and it can be generally stated that they have been maintained in a satisfactory condition. Contraventions of a minor nature were noted at 22 premises (excluding Public Houses which are mentioned elsewhere in this report). At one large factory the attention of the Management was drawn to inefficient washing facilities and other minor matters; these contraventions have now been remedied.

Some of the cafes owned by foreigners require regular inspection to ensure cleanliness of premises and equipment.

#### (B) WORKS CANTEENS

At two new factories works canteens have been established, and at two other factories extensive adaptations have been made to the canteens. At one other new factory which is to be opened in 1956 canteen facilities have been provided. At these five factories all modern equipment has been installed.

#### (C) SLAUGHTERHOUSES

The eight private slaughterhouses in the town have been maintained in a satisfactory condition.

#### (D) MARKET

Constant attention is given to the matter of risk of contamination of food on the open air market stalls and all reasonable steps are taken by the stallholders to prevent this. The provision of a covered-in market would, no doubt, considerably help to reduce contamination, particularly by dust, etc.

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\* Includes 17 fish-frying premises.

### III. SHOPS ACT, 1950—SECTION 38

This Department administers the above named Section of the Shops Act to ensure that the provisions relating to the health and comfort of shop workers are adhered to, and for this purpose 41 visits were paid and at only two shops were minor defects discovered.

Four new shops were erected and opened in Harrowden Road.

Plans for all new shops are examined by this Department to ensure that they comply with all necessary requirements.

IV. PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE  
CONTROLLED BY BYELAWS AND REGULATIONS

1. Moveable Dwellings

(A) AT FAIR AND CIRCUS GROUNDS

Caravans used by the showmen attending the Statute Fairs in Commercial Road and Goldington Green, and fair and circus grounds in Cardington Road were inspected and found to be maintained in a very cleanly condition.

(B) PRIVATE SITES

Licenses were granted to occupiers of caravans on the following sites:—

<i>Site</i>	<i>No. of caravans</i>
9, The Green, Goldington ... ..	1
Paddock, 1, Goldington Green ... ..	4
The Swan, Goldington Road ... ..	3
The Crown Public House, Goldington Road ... ..	1
Farm, Bury Walk ... ..	1
Total ... ..	<hr/> 10 <hr/>

There are no licensed caravan sites in the town and caravans are licensed individually. The caravans are occupied by adults except in two instances where there is a child. Sanitary accommodation is either available at a house on the site or by the caravan dwellers themselves providing chemical closets. Water is, in all cases, obtained from houses nearby. There was a reduction of six caravans since the last report.

Two applications made to station caravans in which families of children were accommodated were not granted, but as the caravans were already on the site action to remove same was not taken until 1956. I do not consider caravans suitable for permanent housing, especially where there are children.

(C) CHALETS

Visits were also made during the year to riverside chalets off Cardington Road, which are occupied during the summer months, and these were found to be satisfactory.

(D) INDUSTRIAL SITES

Inspections have been made of the temporary huts on the site of the new Power Station, Barker's Lane, and the A.R.A. site, Manton's Lane. These are occupied by workmen only and are kept in a satisfactory condition. There is ample sanitary accommodation and water supply.

The occupants obtain their meals at the works canteens nearby.



## V. PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

### 1. Premises Inspected and Treated

The following table shows the number and type of premises inspected and treated.

	Type of Property				
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agricultural	Business	Total
Number of properties inspected—					
(a) on complaint ... ..	10	296	—	64	370
(b) on survey ... ..	15	836	5	317	1,173
Number of properties found to be infested with rats—					
(a) major ... ..	2	—	—	—	2
(b) minor ... ..	13	195	5	32	245
Number of properties found to be infested with mice ... ..	6	129	—	60	195
Number of infested properties treated by Local Authority ... ..	18	307	5	83	413
Number of re-visits to infested premises ... ..	56	857	13	236	1,162
Number of notices served—					
(i) treatment ... ..	—	—	—	9	9
(ii) structural works ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
Number of block control schemes carried out ... ..	TWO				

At two premises major infestation of rats was discovered and subsequent treatment proved effective.

In two cases of infestation it was necessary to undertake treatment at two blocks of properties with satisfactory results. On one of the blocks of shop premises notices were served on the occupiers before the works of eradication could be enforced.

Fifty-two contracts were entered into during the year and the sum of £82 1s. 6d. was received by the Borough Treasurer for such work.



## 2. Sewers

The policy of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is for half-yearly treatment to be undertaken, but in order to determine where treatment is required at the beginning of the year test baits are laid in a number of the sewer manholes. The sewers which were most infested were chiefly those situated in the older parts of the Borough.

The following table shows the number of manholes baited during the year and the results of such treatment.

Number of test baits laid      ...      ...      95

Area No.	No. of manholes	No. of manholes baited	No. of manholes showing pre-bait take	No. of manholes showing complete take	No. of manholes showing no take
1 West of High Street and North of river	482	423	239	179	184
2 East of High Street and North of river	350	205	83	77	122
3 South of the river	450	155	61	42	94
Totals      ...	*1,282	783	383	298	400

\* Includes 138 lampholes

In accordance with the instructions of the Ministry concerned, after poison baits are laid no further inspection is undertaken until the next half-yearly treatment is commenced, so it is not possible to give any estimate of the number of rats destroyed immediately after treatment.

## 3. General

As pointed out in previous reports the work of eradication of rats and mice, although not a profit making service, is regarded as an important one as much damage to property and food-stuffs is prevented and the possible risk of epidemic disease is checked. The only charge made for rodent control treatment is 7s. per hour per man to business premises, a formal contract being entered into. No charge is made in respect of dwelling houses.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries organised for the workable area Refresher Courses for rodent operators in October and for Sanitary Inspectors in November. These were arranged by and held at the Public Health Department.

**VI. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948**  
**SECTION 47**

**1. Persons in Need of Care and Attention**

This Section provides for the necessary care and attention of persons who

(a) are suffering from grave chronic disease or, being aged and infirm or physically incapacitated, are living in insanitary conditions, and

(b) are unable to devote to themselves, and are not receiving from other persons, proper care and attention.

The following table shows the present position with regard to two elderly persons who were removed to Hospital on Magistrates' Orders.

No. of case	Sex	Age	Conditions found on inspection	Remarks
2/53	F	86	Widow, living alone, crippled and unable to walk. Incontinent. Loss of bowel control	Removed to hospital on Magistrates' Order in May, 1953, and retained on renewal of Orders
5/55	F	84	Living alone. In very poor state of health	Removed to Hospital on Magistrates' Order on 10th May, 1955, and retained on renewal of Orders

**CASE NO. 1 IN 1954 REPORT**

This patient died in July 1955, some twelve months after deciding to become a voluntary patient. She was compulsorily removed to Hospital in May, 1953.

Retention in Hospital on an Order given by a Magistrate extends for three months only and it has therefore been necessary to re-apply for renewal of the Orders granted.

Twelve new cases were investigated during the year, as follows:—

No. of case	Sex	Age	Conditions found on inspection	Action taken	Remarks
1/55	M	73	Living in one room. Untidy	Son agreed to look after this person	Being kept under observation
2/55	F	84	Patient bedridden	Voluntarily removed to hospital	
3/55	F	81	Living in one room. Poor state of health	Voluntarily removed to hospital	Died within two weeks of admission to hospital
4/55	M	76	Found living in out-building at rear of public house. Conditions very dirty, and man suffering from a malignant disease	Voluntarily removed to hospital	Later discharged to home of a friend in Bedford where he died within two weeks
6/55	F	79	Living alone and in poor state of mental health	Under care of own doctor	
7/55	F	79	Living alone. Home in dirty condition	Patient voluntarily removed to hospital	
8/55	F	72	Living alone. Poor state of health	Voluntarily removed to hospital	Died in hospital
9/55	F	82	Living with mentally deficient son. Bedridden. House filthy	House cleaned. District Nurse and daily Home Help Service arranged	Died two months later
10/55	F	75	Living alone. Ill, and in moribund condition. House filthy	Immediately removed to hospital. On previous visits help was refused, but home conditions were fair	Died three hours after admission to hospital
11/55	F	85	Living with feeble-minded daughter. House untidy	Refused help. Case referred to own doctor, who is giving necessary attention	
12/55	F	76	Living alone. Suffered from delusions. House tidy	Refused help	Subsequently found dead from burns a few days later having fallen on a fire



Given in tabular form also are the cases discovered in previous years and still remaining on the Department records.

No. of case	Sex	Age	Conditions found and action taken
1	F	84	Under observation since 1950. Taken ill early in 1954 and taken to hospital Still in hospital
2	F Son	88 56	Woman in hospital since 1951 and remains there on a voluntary basis. Son under care of Mental Health Officer, but living at home
3	F	75	Spinster living alone. House untidy. Being kept under observation
4	F	74	Spinster living alone. In poor state of health. Now in hospital
7	M	61	Conditions much improved. Looked after before by other occupants of house
8	M F	77 73	Brother and sister. Rooms in untidy condition. Home Help in attendance
9	F	59	Spinster living alone. House untidy. Poor health and low mentality. Being kept under observation by Mental Health Officer
10	M	81	Removed to hospital in 1954. Still in hospital
11	F	75	Spinster. Now home with companion. Being kept under observation
12	F	71	Spinster living alone and in poor state of health. Being kept under observation
14	F	81	Patient living alone. In poor state of health. Arrangements made for Home Help Service to attend: meals provided
15	M & F	Over 80	Husband died during the year. District Nurse and Home Help in attendance
18	M	81	Patient occupies bedsitting room on first floor. In poor state of health
19	F	74	Mental health of patient not very good. Home Help service arranged. Removed to Mental Hospital in May, 1955

#### OLD PEOPLE

On investigation the persons concerned are found to be elderly and usually living alone, and in many cases do not wish to leave their homes to live with relatives or in hostels, as they prefer to spend their last years of life in their own homes. In some instances the circumstances of persons came to the knowledge of the Department rather late, and their conditions were very tragic. In four cases death followed shortly afterwards. In view of the fact that the period of life is now longer the problem of the aged is

an increasing one, and one is not fully aware of the extent of this, and this could only be ascertained by surveys from time to time. The Bedford Council of Social Service have the matter of the aged under constant review, and consideration has also been given by them regarding housing of such persons. The services rendered by the Home Help Service, District Nurses, Health Visitors and Welfare Officers in a number of the cases were a means of improving the condition of these aged persons whereby it was possible for them to remain in their homes. Such services are greatly appreciated.

**2. Section 50—Burial or Cremation of the Dead**

As no arrangements for burial had been made by relatives or friends it was necessary for the Department to arrange for the burial of the bodies of two persons. Details are as follows:—

No.	Age	Sex	Cost of Funeral	Recovery of expense
1	78	M	£ s. d. 11 15 6	No assets
2	77	F	14 6 3	Full cost recovered from estate

## **VII. RENT RESTRICTION ACTS, 1920-1946**

### **1. Unfurnished and Furnished Accommodation**

No requests for investigation as to rents charged for this type of accommodation were received by this office, but notification was received from the local Rent Tribunal that 9 Borough cases relating to furnished accommodation were considered, and that in 1 instance the rent was approved and in 8 reductions were made.

### **2. General**

With regard to the provisions of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, this has been reported upon on page 47.

Owners, tenants, sub-tenants and lodgers have visited the office on many occasions seeking information concerning eviction and rent charges. In some cases tenants of furnished accommodation have been evicted on High Court Writs which have made some extra demand on the Borough's housing accommodation.

On inspection of houses and flats it has been found that quite frequently the legal requirements are not entered in the rent book, and attention of the owners has been directed to such omissions.

With regard to rents paid by foreign nationals in houses let in lodgings, reference is made to this in pages 49 to 50.

Many houses are still controlled and tenants pay low rents while the cost of repairs has increased to a high figure, and on account of this owners are finding it difficult from a financial point of view to carry out even essential repairs. It would appear, therefore, that there may be deterioration in some types of property unless the existing law relating to rents is reconsidered by the Government.



## VIII. FACTORIES ACT, 1937

### 1. Inspections

The following tables show the number of factories on the register, the number of inspections made and the number of defects discovered and the results of action taken.

#### INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH

Premises	No. on Register	No. of inspections	No. of written notices	No. of occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ... ..	55	31	1	—
* (ii) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ... ..	305	94	8	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises) ...	35	15	—	—
Total ...	395	140	9	—

\* Many of these are small factories where only a few persons are employed.

# CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which proceedings were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	Referred by H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	6	3 (1)	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	3	1 (1)	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	2 (1)	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	6	9 (6)	—	6	—
Total	17	15 (9)	—	6	—

*Note:—*Figures in brackets denote work outstanding from previous years; these are included in unbracketed figures.

## 2. Outwork

The following shows the number of outworkers on the register:—

<i>Nature of Work</i>			<i>No. of Persons</i>
Wearing apparel (making, etc.) ...	...	...	42
Household linen ...	...	...	3
Curtains and furniture hangings	...	...	3
Furniture and upholstery	...	...	2
Total ...			<hr/> 50 <hr/>



## IX. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION

### 1. Disinfection

Steam disinfection of quantities of bedding, clothing, etc., was undertaken for bedding firms and national and local authorities and undertakings, for which charges were made to cover expenses. A sum of £5 4s. 6d. was received in this connection plus 17s. 6d. for collection and delivery. Disinfection is also undertaken, free of charge, for householders in cases of notifiable and other diseases.

### 2. Disinfestation

The work of destroying insect pests of all types is carried out by this Department, and no charge is made for this service. The general method is by the spraying of liquid insecticides, or powder, containing D.D.T. and other chemicals. The results of treatment were satisfactory in all cases. There were no serious infestations.

The following table shows the number of infested premises treated, together with the types of infestation.

Premises	Nature of Vermin	Number of Premises
Houses—Council ... ..	Bugs	11
	Ants	5
	Wasps	—
	Beetles, etc.	10
Houses—privately owned ...	Bugs	18
	Ants	6
	Wasps	18
	Beetles, etc.	7
Business premises ... ..	Bugs	—
	Ants	3
	Wasps	3
	Beetles, etc.	6
Total ...		87

At 11 houses, in addition to the above, it was found necessary to remove and destroy filthy bedding and clothing, and at some the bedding was removed for steam disinfestation.

## **X. OTHER ACTS AND ORDERS**

### **1. Merchandise Marks Act, 1926**

Constant observations were made on shops, stalls and vehicles to ensure that the requirements of the above named Act, and Orders made thereunder, with regard to labelling of certain imported foodstuffs were being complied with. There were several instances when certain fruits exposed for sale (generally on the Market Square) were not properly labelled and on attention of the vendors being called to this immediate action was taken to label the commodities.

Details of the Orders made under the Act are available in leaflet form and may be obtained from this Department by traders and others on request. From time to time, however, copies of these leaflets are distributed to the wholesale and retail trades concerned.

### **2. Rag Flock and Other Filling Materials Act, 1951**

There are only a few premises at which rag flock is used by the furnishing trade, and as this material was supplied with guarantees of cleanliness it was not considered necessary to take samples.

### **3. Pet Animals Act, 1951**

This Act governs the licensing and the conditions under which pet animals are kept for sale; there are four premises and one market stall registered. From a hygienic point of view the premises are being maintained in a satisfactory condition.

### **4. Offensive Trades**

#### **Old Metal and Marine Stores**

There are three traders who deal in rags and bones (an offensive trade) as well as scrap metal and salvageable items. In addition there are four other traders who deal in old metal and marine stores only. On visiting, the premises were found to be satisfactorily maintained.

In addition, the Local Authority maintain a salvage depot at Newnham, under the supervision of the Borough Engineer.



## **XI. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **1. Industrial Premises**

#### *(a) Fumes*

Several complaints were again received relating to fumes from a fertilizer works in the town, and upon investigation it was found that an organic compound was being used which was causing smells. After discussion with the management agreement was reached whereby only a small amount of the compound will be used in the future. Since the last report the ownership of the factory has changed, and the new proprietors have not agreed to remove the factory to a site on the Sewage Works which had been offered to the previous owners. They have, however, agreed to carry out certain improvements to the plant and premises which it is hoped will, when undertaken, minimize the nuisance.

#### *(b) Noise*

Further complaints were received from occupiers of houses near a large engineering works on the west side of the town of occasional noise from a test bay. The management was interviewed, and stated that all reasonable steps had been taken to minimise the noise, and therefore from the Authority's point of view nothing further could be done.

Complaints were again received of noise and smells from a factory on the town's south side. Visits were made, and at an interview with the management advice was given to obtain the services of a firm specialising in eradication of offensive odours. This was undertaken and no further complaints were received during the year. With regard to the noise, additional suppressors were fitted.

Noise from a coal elevator was the cause of complaints made by householders against another factory in the south part of the town. When the attention of the management was drawn to this the plant was overhauled and the noise has been somewhat reduced. The firm have under consideration the question of installing oil fired boilers to replace the coal fired boilers; this, if undertaken, will dispense with the coal elevator.

### **2. General**

#### *(a) Building Plans*

In conjunction with the Borough Engineer & Surveyor's Department all plans for new buildings or alterations to existing premises deposited for approval by the Town Planning Committee are examined to ensure that they comply with the Acts and Byelaws concerned, and if any adjustments are required these are undertaken before submission to the Committee.

#### *(b) Town Planning and Re-development Schemes*

Some time was spent in work involved in the acquisition of property situated in the central re-development area and also properties on the line of the proposed new road from Willmer's Corner to Cauldwell Street, in order to assist with the scheme.



(c) *Hairdressers*

There are the following hairdressing establishments in the town:—

For both sexes ...	...	...	...	10
For males only	...	...	...	29
For females only	...	...	...	29*
				—
Total	...	...	...	68
				==

\* Seven of these are situated in private houses.

In order to ensure a reasonable standard of hygiene in this type of business visits are made from time to time, and generally conditions have been satisfactory.

(d) *Public Conveniences*

The public conveniences in the town centre are controlled by the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, while those situated in the Parks and Recreation Grounds are under the supervision of the Parks Superintendent. In my view there is still an urgent need for additional public conveniences in the town centre, while on the perimeter of the town there are no conveniences whatsoever and those situated just outside the town centre are in need of modernisation. Plans have been prepared for these conveniences, but it is only fair to state that owing to capital expenditure involved these have had to be deferred. Additional sanitary accommodation was commenced, however, at Longholme, and this should be completed early in 1956. Plans for the reconstruction of the St. Paul's Square conveniences were approved during the year, and work is expected to begin in 1956.

(e) *Problem Families*

One family living on a Corporation Housing Estate was referred to the Bedfordshire County Council Northern Divisional Co-ordinating Committee as a problem family, and a report on the house was requested from the Department.

The family consisted of the husband and wife and six young children who were in a very poor and unsatisfactory condition generally due to mental and other illness of the parents. As a result of decisions at the Committee this Authority cleaned and redecorated the house, destroyed filthy bedding and furniture, and obtained replacement of this from voluntary services. The children were admitted to the Day Nursery for a period in order to enable the parents, with the help of the Home Help Service, Sanitary Inspector and Health Visitor, to regain the standard of a normal decent household. This has resulted in improvement, and the family is being kept under supervision.

(f) *Exhumations*

In connection with the extension of Goldington Church it was necessary to exhume and re-inter four bodies in the churchyard. To ensure that Home Office requirements were satisfactorily undertaken four visits were paid to the churchyard during the course of exhumation and re-burial.

(g) *Harpur Trust Almshouses*

In order to assist the appropriate Committee in filling vacancies at these almshouses the Housing Manager and myself continued the policy of selecting from the applicants suitable persons for the above named houses, and visiting where found necessary before making recommendations.

(h) *Public Health Education*

On occasions talks on Public Health work have been given to students from local training colleges.





